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First Draft  
(Supplement)  
20 August 1957

I N T E L L I G E N C E   A D V I S O R Y   C O M M I T T E E

Annual Report to the National Security Council  
on the Status of the Foreign Intelligence Program

References: (a) IAC-D-55/11 (Final, 14 August 1956  
(b) IAC-D-55/12.3 (First Draft), 13 August 1957  
(c) IAC-D-55/12.3 (Supplement), 19 August 1957

1. We are forwarding herewith a draft summary of the annual report to the NSC and a proposed Annex on NSCID's relevant to the activities discussed. In general, these are drafted along the lines of the summary and Annex A incorporated in last year's report.

2. We expect to consider these drafts in our coordination session following our review of the basic text of the annual report.



Secretary  
IAC

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SUMMARY

EVALUATION OF US CAPABILITIES TO PROVIDE WARNING  
OF ATTACK

The USSR's growing strength in advanced weapons - modern jet aircraft, guided missiles, submarines, and nuclear bombs and warheads - is increasing from year to year its capability for large-scale surprise attack. Since the amount of preparation necessary to mount such attacks is less than it was for conventional forces, the difficulties for intelligence in giving warning prior to the launching of attack are increasing.

At present, as a rough estimate, a force up to 300 long-range aircraft could probably be launched concurrently without producing indications permitting intelligence to give warning of possible attack. Generally speaking, the probability of obtaining warning indications would increase as the numbers of aircraft increased. There is no basis for judging at what point the chances of receiving warning indications would be about even; it is believed, however, that if the number of aircraft

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launched concurrently was as great as about 800, the chances of their producing warning indications would be considerably greater than even. If received, these indications would probably permit intelligence to warn of a possible attack some 4-8 hours before attacking aircraft could reach radar warning lines.

The use in an initial attack of other forces than aircraft might extend the period of warning and increase the firmness of warnings with respect to the likelihood of attack. Use of submarines or of the ground and air forces stationed in Germany might permit warnings ranging from two days to a week. Use of guided missiles would probably not give rise to warning indications once these weapons were positioned for launching. If the USSR undertook to mobilize its full war potential prior to attack, an increasingly unlikely course of action, there would probably be a period of at least six months during which intelligence could give warning of progressively greater readiness

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for war. However, it is uncertain that the pattern of indications would justify more specific warning at any time during this period, and it would always be possible for the USSR to attack with its ready forces at any time during such a period of mobilization.

In this connection, Intelligence Advisory Committee action has been taken to organize a Warning Systems Survey Committee to reexamine the capabilities of intelligence resources to provide essential warning and information.

#### EVALUATION OF SOVIET CAPABILITIES AND INTENTIONS

The struggle for dominance within the Soviet leadership since Stalin's death has resulted in an increasing exposure to intelligence of the inner workings of the regime and of the issues which divide the leadership. The public justifications made by the victorious factions in the successive crises since 1953 have enabled intelligence to check its information and thus to formulate its views on a sounder footing of evidence. This does not mean that we are in a very much better position to predict particular

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developments in the USSR, such as the rise or fall of individual personalities, but it does mean that we can delimit more confidently the range of possible developments on the Soviet internal scene. Similarly, the relatively greater openness of discussion in the USSR and the greater accessibility of Soviet personalities at all levels have given us a better insight into the motivations and tactics of Soviet foreign policy. These gains are more significant for short-term estimates than for long-term ones, however. While political intelligence can be reasonably confident of its judgments on probable developments over a span of two years or so, estimates extending over a longer period are if anything becoming more difficult. This is so because the Soviet system is apparently undergoing a process of change and because the Soviet leadership seems likely simultaneously to be presented with some difficult choices of policy. It must reconsider its economic policies at a time when military costs and the claims of consumption are pressing ever harder on the traditional priority given to investment to sustain a high rate of economic growth. It must reconsider the shape of its military programs during a

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period of revolutionary change in weapons. Relations with the restive Satellites and Communist China have evidently called for redefinition. There is evidence that the regime has increasing difficulty in retaining the loyalty of students and intellectuals and needs to provide more nourishing ideological fare. All these more fundamental problems affecting future developments in the USSR are extremely complex, slow-moving in their resolution, and do not yield readily to reliable estimating on the basis of the kinds of evidence ordinarily available to intelligence.

In the field of military intelligence, strenuous collection efforts over the past year have produced much additional information on the actual strength and capabilities of those elements of the Soviet military establishment which pose a direct threat to US security interests. Military intelligence information available on the countries of the Sino-Soviet Bloc is now adequate to support broad assessments of the current capabilities of the armed forces of those countries. At the same time, however, the increasing rapidity of change in military technology is reducing our ability to collect information which will provide a

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firm basis for future projections of Soviet military capabilities. Extensive travel by US attaches, as well as thorough exploitation of open source materials and defectors from the Bloc, have resulted in gains in certain categories of military information despite Bloc security measures. A continued expansion of clandestine activities is being undertaken to intensify the collection of military intelligence on the Sino-Soviet Bloc. Increased attention is also being given to the development of scientific and technical equipment and methods for overcoming security measures in target areas.

Gains in economic intelligence on the Sino-Soviet Bloc have resulted from a growing return on our effort in research and analysis over several years past and from a continuing increase in published data within the Bloc, particularly the USSR. At the same time, because Soviet plan projections to 1960 have had to be revised and may be an unsure guide to actual Soviet achievement over the next several years, the problem of predicting future economic trends may become more difficult. Research is being continued on the costs of Soviet military programs and

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this provides some guidance as to the possible scale of these programs and so to the development of the economy as a whole over the next several years.

There has been continued improvement in scientific intelligence on the Sino-Soviet Bloc both through research and through information gained from increased contacts with Soviet nationals. During the past year, significant information has been obtained on Soviet nuclear weapons testing, but there is inadequate current information on Soviet production of fissionable materials and nuclear weapons. Although there has been a continued improvement in the quality of our guided missile intelligence information, it is still inadequate to meet our minimum intelligence requirements. The highest priority continues to be given to this problem, with special emphasis being placed on technical collection methods.

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